



IGDIR



ABOUT İĞDIR

Located in the plains surrounded by mountains, İğdir has a surprising geography with its varying topographic structure. This large area surrounded by Alagöz Mountain (4058 m) on the Armenian border to the north, Karasu – Aras mountain range and Lesser and Greater Ağrı Mountains to the south has an interestingly different land structure. Vivified by the Aras River to the north, İğdir Plains is dominated by the green of orchards and agriculture fields, while the heights to the south shadow the plain with its snow white peaks. The land between the mountains and the plains has a varying view with deep valleys, streams, seasonal ponds, volcanic calcified lava flow and natural formations resembling Cappadocia. The skirts of Ağrı mountain at the south of Aralık and Karakoyunlu Counties is



adorned with mainly black lava flow and calcified scum, while the central county and south of Tuzluca has a soil composition of harmonious pink, brown, white and green.

Surrounded by Nakhchivan Autonomous Republic in Azerbaijan to the east, Iran to the southeast, Ağrı to the south, Kars to the west and northwest and Armenia to the north and northeast, Iğdır is located on an important trade route used by caravans for centuries. The wide plain called Sürmeli Depression in Turkey and Sahat Depression in Armenia **is the area people have settled after the great flood of Noah according to Bible**. Located on the eastern edge of our borders makes the city “where the sun rises the first”.



Tuzluca

Major heights of the city are located in its south. The most important peaks of Karasu – Aras (South Aras) mountain range that lie in an east – west direction for kilometers are Haşhaş (2554 m), Köroğlu (2895 m), Kızılcaziyaret (2887 m), Kavak (2521 m), Kuzkuzbaba (3027 m), Koh (3112 m), Perili (3142 m), Durak (2811 m), Zor (3196 m) and Pamuk (2639 m) summits. Among these 2550 meter high Akoluk (Tekaltı) Mountain has a special place. This summit at the northern tip of the range is in view of everywhere in Iğdır. Whether you enter the city from Kars or Ağrı or even Iran, it will welcome you with its sharp peak. To the east two massive mountains not a part of the range, rise to the skies. The best way to photograph these mountains in Aralık county; Greater Ağrı (5137 m) casting a shadow on Iğdır plane and which is the tallest peak of Turkey and Europe and 7th highest peak of our country Lesser Ağrı (3896 m). The most beautiful valleys of Iğdır are located in Tuzluca County. Valleys of Aşağı Stream between Abbasgöl - İnce - Bağlan - Uçkaya, Acı Stream between Kandilli - Taşköprü - Karacaören - Ünlendi - Uçkaya, Sarıabdal Stream between Canderviş - Akdiz - Kelekli - Sarıabdal and Uğruca Stream on the line of Uğruca - Güzeldere - Göktaş yield panoramic views with their surprising earth shapes. Plateaus scattered in the nooks of the mountains on alpine meadows are the major elements of tourism potential of Iğdır. Along with Serdarbulak and Korhan Plateaus on the skirts of Ağrı Mountain, plateaus of Iğdır with their stunning views can be seen on the skirts of the mountain ranges that cover the south. Especially plateaus such as Güngörmez, Arslanlı, Tutak, Keko, Sado, Konaklı, Kandilli, Nahırkıran, Hacıbedir, Kızılcaziyaret, Kazkoparan and Akpınar that spread on the flowery meadows on the skirts of the snowy peaks are so beautiful to compete their counterparts in Eastern Black Sea Region.





Surrounded by mountains to the south, Iğdır's most important stream is Aras River that stems from the Bingöl province. This long river that sets the border with Armenia joins with Arpaçay river stemming from Lake Çıldır at Halıkışla and gets stronger. Other notable water sources of the City are Gaziler (Pernavut), Buruksu, Orta Karasu, Aşağı Karasu, Karaçomak, Yakup and Güngörmez streams. Seasonal waterfalls can be observed on these streams. Waterfalls that dry up or slow down in summer are Bahçelimeydan, Gökteş, Uğruca, Şip (Serdarbulak Plateau) and Zegman (Yenidoğan). Iğdır does not house a natural or glacial lake.



Only example that can be counted as a glacial lake is the Lake K p at the skirts of Ađrı mountain that is about to dry up. Many ponds that are formed by winter rain and most of which dry up in August can be observed. Abbasg l, Ađabey, AŐađıaktaŐ, AŐađı G ll ce Yaylası, AŐık H seyin, Alik se (Nevruz), Greater Ađrı Mountain, Bendemurat, Bah elimeydan,  i ekli, Yukarı  ıyıklı, Dipsiz, G rg re, Kaya ren, Karasu, Ortabucak Haraba, Ortabucak  illi, Serdarbulak, Sado, Turna, Uđruca, Unbulak, U kaya (Ekerek) and Yukarıkatırlı ponds are the water sources highly vital for villages and plateaus. Lake Balık at 2250 m. elevation, which is within borders of Ađrı and gets as close as 500 meters to the border of Tuzluca county of Iđdır and reed lake Karasu – Aralık can be added to these.

Streams and ponds are the main sources of the aqueduct system of the region that has been used for millennia in the region. Lack of significant rainfall, irregularity of the rainfall regime and high amount of vaporization point out to the importance of agricultural irrigation in Iđdır plain. Agriculture starting during the Urartu era has led to construction and use of irrigation canals.

The most important of the water canals dated back to 7th century B.C. are the structures that are built by stopping Karaca ren Stream stemming from Sinek Plateau. Alik se canal starting from Kaya ren Village, Ak alı Quarter and winding down for 12 kilometers; 15 km long Mollakamer Canal that brings water to Mollakamer and G ll ce villages, Haraba Canal starting from Ortabucak (Haraba) village and watering Hamurkesen (Pecinis), Y ceotak, Bađlan (G labi) and Hadımlı villages and U kaya Canal starting from  nlendi are most important parts of this system.

Other examples of historical water canals include; G norta GaŐı Canal starting from CanderviŐ village and reaching Sarıabdal Village after flowing through Akdiz, Hasankent,  i ekli and Kelekli villages, Zor Canal that uses streams stemming from Zor Mountains and passing through Kara omak - Alik cek - NiŐankaya - Harmand ven and Kara omak - Bendemurat -  r Őm Ő Routes and Ahmet Gor Canal 6 km southeast of Karakoyunlu County.





AĞRI MOUNTAIN AND NATIONAL PARK

Declared Ağrı mountain National Park in 2004, 88,014 hectare area is spread over Iğdır and Ağrı Cities. Located within the borders of Doğubayazıt County of Ağrı and Aralık and Karakoyunlu Counties of Iğdır, the national park is most notable for Greater Ağrı summit (5137 m.) which is the highest peak in Europe and Turkey and its sister Lesser Ağrı peak. Park consists of three sections namely Greater and Lesser Ağrı Mountains, Meteor Depression and Noah's Arc region. Rising over common base up to 2500 meters, these two mountains are separated by the 14 kilometers long Serdarbulak Pass (2687 m.). The best photographs of Greater and Lesser Ağrı can be taken from Aralık and Doğubayazıt counties.



65% of the Ağrı Mountain, which is called Eğri (Crooked) Mountain by ancient Turks, Küh-i Nuh by Persians, Cebel ül Haris by Arabs, Masik by Armenians and Ararat by Western countries, is located within Iğdır's borders. It is a dormant volcano with basalt up to 4000 meters and andesite lava above that. Despite being surrounded by numerous valleys all around, the most characteristic of these are the glacial valleys to the south and north. The glacial valley to the north of Ağrı Mountain, on the border with Iğdır City is also known as Ahura Depression and the glacial valley to the south is called Öküz Deresi.



HISTORY

The region containing traces of Paleolithic and Mesolithic ages, especially Sürmeli Depression is one of the most important living spaces of humanity. The plains between Ağrı and Alagöz mountains where Iğdır is located has been under dominance of Hurris, Urartus, Cimmerian, Sakas, Persian, Helen, Arsaklı, Roman, Armenian, Sassanian, Oghuz, İlkanid, Karakoyunlu, Akkoyunlu, Safavid, Seljuk, Ottoman and Russians through history. The trace of this historical wealth can be observed in many parts of the city.

On the route of caravan, Iğdır hosts plenty of castles. Almost always nested on rocky ground on high peaks, these defensive structures are Karakale (Sürmeli), Karakoyunlu, Iğdır (Korhan), Güngörmez (Köroğlu), Kasımın Tığı, Gaziler (Bahçecik Village) Kız Castle, Aşık Hüseyin, Katırlı, Aslanlı, Gedikli, Yağlı Castle, Aliköse, Kumbulak, Bahçecik (Rağbet) Köroğlu Castle, Çiçekli, Şedik Castle, Kalaça (Galaca), Kandilli, Karakoyun, Yüceotağ, Alçalı, Kumbulak and Unlendi Castles. Unfortunately most of these castles have been destroyed with time.

Among the archeological sites are Melekli Kültepe and Gaziler Kültepe barrows and Asma and Kamışlı rock settlements are worth mentioning. There are many sepulchers in the city. The most notable ones are Yukarıerhacı, Çıraklı, Göktaş, Aşağıaktaş and Karakoyun sepulchers.

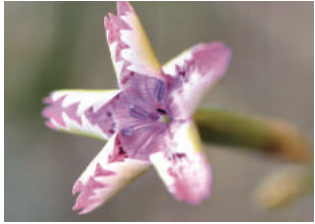
Other historical monuments in Iğdır are; vaults, grave stelas, Harmandöven (Ejder) Caravansary built by Seljuks in 13th century. Ortaköy bath and manor in Aralık County. Kul Yusuf Vault in Çakırtaş village of Central County and Gödekli and Kolikent vaults in the villages of the same names of Aralık county are other notable examples reflecting Seljuk era with their architecture. Ram formed grave stelas can be found in Ağaver, Çakırtaş, Hakmehmet, Kasımcı, Kuzugüden, Küllük, Melekli, Aşağıerhacı, Yayı, Karakoyunlu, Ortaköy, Aşağıkatırlı and Hadımlı graveyards.





FLORA and FAUNA

Surrounded by high mountains to the south and Aras River basin to the north, Iğdır is among the richest regions of the east with respect to plant wildlife. Covered mainly with steppes and Iğdır Plain created by Aras River, city hosts very little forests. About 1700 to 1800 plant species are estimated within the borders of the city. This diversity includes approximately 60 endemic species. Undoubtedly the lushest part of this geography is the skirts of Ağrı Mountain. It also hosts most of the endemic species of the region. Notable examples are *Jurinella moschus*, Ağrı Mountain Astragalus (*Astragalus vesicaris*), Ağrı Mountain Besomish Toadflax (*Linaria genistifolia*), Acem Persian Gypsyweed (*Veronica persica* Poiret), chrysanthemum (*Erodium chrysanthum*) and Ryegrass (lemon balm) (*Centaurea depressa*).

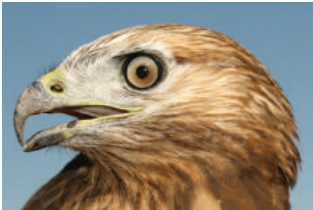


Fauna samples in İğdir are; boar, fox, wolf, bear, rabbit, lynx, steppe falcon, Honey buzzard, rock partridge, gray partridge, eagle owl, owl, golden eagle, hawk, red crested pochard, coot, cormorant, kingfisher, crested lark, vulture, ryegrass and lesser kestrel.



Bird Watching Areas of Iğdır

305 bird species recorded in Iğdır is 65% of the species in our country and this is the mark that Iğdır is the most important living space for birds. The most important element is the Aras River bird sanctuary. Being the richest area east of Samsun – Adana line, Aras River Bird Sanctuary meets 4 separate criteria of Ramsar status given to globally important wetlands. Other areas suitable for bird watching are Karasu-Aralık reeds and Lake Balık at the Ağrı border.





ABOUT TREKKING ROUTES

İğdır hosts mountain climb routes and daily trekking routes that will more than please the nature lovers. Especially the mountains ranging from 1500 to 3000 meters, to the west of Ağrı Mountain are fairly suitable for trekking with its deep valleys and plateaus located on alpine meadows.

Due to suitable geography, İğdır trekking routes generally spread over the valleys at the south of Tuzluca county border. You can choose to hike up in tranquil valleys in breathtaking green landscape in company with clear streams stemming from the snowy mountains. Some of the routes are in Lake Balık, which is located on the Ağrı border of İğdır. Located at elevation of 2250 meters, this lake is the largest high elevation lake of Turkey. Surrounded by 3000 meter high peaks, the lake shines rich blue in a basin. With 100 meters depth, this rare wetland presents a surprising view in winters when the surface freezes. Serdarbulak, one of the most important plateaus of İğdır did not go unnoticed during the preparation of the routes. One of the most important commercial and military passes of Anatolian Peninsula, Serdarbulak Pass, located between İğdır and Ağrı is being used for centuries. This trekking route planned between Serdarbulak Plateau and Güngören Plateau trails between Greater and Lesser Ağrı Mountains.

Still bearing the signs of the commercial buzz it once had, İğdır has other trekking routes which include climb to high mountains such as Greater and Lesser Ağrı at the east. Dubbed the roof of Turkey, Ağrı is the highest summit of Turkey with 5137 m height. Reaching the summit is possible through two routes; Classical Doğubayazıt route which can be attended by anyone during summers and İğdır route which requires technical climb. Professional climbers try several different routes. Regardless of the climb route, it is an advantage that the summit of Ağrı mountain is within the borders of İğdır.

We should note that 3986 meters high Lesser Ağrı, which is among the hardest climbs of Turkey is within the trekking routes. GPS coordinates of all trekking routes and climbing routes have been defined and mapped. You can access GPS coordinates on www.igdirtrekking.com. To obtain the guide book which details the routes, you can send e-mail to info@igdirtrekking.com.

You should leave your footprint on plateaus, valleys and mountains of İğdır, the land of hospitable people offering travelers as guests and friends to share their food and tea, and experience the geographical diversity it offers.





WHERE IS IT?

Iğdır Central County

Karakale, Asma Village Sepulcher and settlement, Korhan Castle, Iğdır Harmandöven (Ejder) Caravansary, Kul Yusuf Vault, Yukarıerhacı Sepulcher and cult area, Yukarıerhacı Kız Castle, Karaçomak Church, Korhan Church, Güngörmez Village Köroğlu Castle, Melekli Kültepe Barrow, Aşağıerhacı Oğlan Castle, Korhan Plateau, Obaköy Martyrs Monument, Iğdır Genocide Monument, Graveyards (Ağaver, Çakırtaş, Hakmehmet, Kasımcı, Kuzugüden, Küllük, Melekli, Aşağıerhacı, Yayıcı)

Aralık

Hacı İbrahim (Gödekli) Vault, Ortaköy Bath, Serdarbulak Barracks, Tekaltı Barracks, Ortaköy Graveyard, Kolikent Vault, Kırıkdirek Armenian Graveyard, Süreyya Fountain, Serdarbulak Plateau, Şip Plateau and Fall.

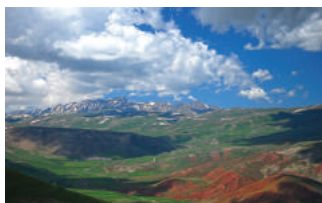
Karakoyunlu

Karakoyunlu Castle and settlement, Karakoyunlu Sepulcher, Karakoyunlu Graveyard, Karasu - Aralık Wetland

Tuzluca

Tuzluca Caves, Aslanlı Castle, Âşık Hüseyin Castle and settlement, Bahçecik Village Kız (Gaziler) Castle, Gedikli Castle, Hadımlı village Köroğlu Castle, Hasankent Cairn, Hasancan Castle, Kalaca Castle, Küllütepe Barrow, Uçkaya Ottoman Barracks, Rağbet Village Köroğlu Castle, Karakale Castle (Sürmeli Castle), Tavşantepe Castle, Üçleritepe Castle, Yukarıkatırlı Castle, Yüceotağı Castle, Aşağıaktaş Sepulcher, Gökteş Sepulcher, Çıraklı Sepulcher, Gedikli Martyr's Cemetery, Graveyards (Aşağıkatırlı, Hadımlı), ponds (Candeviş, Uğruca, Abbasgöl, Unbulak, Yukarıkatırlı, Unlendi, Çiçekli, Uçkaya), Plateaus (Arslanlı, Tutak, Keko, Sado, Konaklı, Kandilli, Nahırkırın, Hacıbedir, Kızılcaziyaret, Kazkoparan, Akpınar), Yukarı Çıyıklı Wetland.







WHAT TO BUY?

The wealth of this ancient city that witnessed numerous civilizations is reflected into the cultural texture as well. Rug, carpet, halça (a kind of carpet), socks, felting, bagpipe, needlework, harmal, whitemithing, saddle-making, tin making and lorimer are among the handicrafts trying to survive in Iğdır. Unfortunately, decreasing transhumance and increasing migration threatens the extinction of handicrafts.

Iğdır's multi colored mosaic is also reflected in its cuisine. Soups such as Katık aşı, keleş, hõrre, ayranası (gırara dev), omaç (evelik) aşı, kail, şile aşı, sût aşı (gırara şir) and main dishes such as bozbaş, roasted meat on an iron plate (selegeli), Kurdish meatballs, cıvır, salmanca roasted meat, tike kebab, piti, hıngel, meat pastry, fish cake, haşıl, mafiş, helise, zeğme, onion stew, rice pilaf and killor are some of the local tastes.



BEFORE YOU GO BACK YOU SHOULD

- Climb Ağrı Mountain which is on the border of İğdır and the highest summit of Europe and our country.
- Discover Tuzluca valleys on a jeep safari or mountain bikes.
- Join a photo-safari tour around the ponds, especially in the spring.
- Walk around the ancient water tunnels of the Urartu era.
- Shooting Great and Lesser Ağrı mountains on the same shot from Aralık County.
- Taste the fruits, the gift of fertile İğdır Plain.

TRANSPORTATION

Distance of some cities to İğdır;

İstanbul	1563	km.
Ankara	1196	km.
Antalya	1705	km.
Ağrı	145	km.
Kars	143	km.

Distance of its counties to İğdır central county;

Tuzluca	41	km.
Karakoyunlu	13	km.
Aralık	45	km.



Air Travel

Ağrı Airport is 10 km to the city centre on the road to Tuzluca County. Various companies have direct flights from and to İstanbul and Ankara and connected flights from and to Antalya and İzmir, every day.

INFORMATION AND LOCAL GUIDANCE

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